REMARKS

Claims 1 through 20 are in the application, with Claims 21 and 22 having been added. Claims 1, 12 and 19 are the independent claims herein. No new matter has been added. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections under 35 USC § 102(b)

Claims 1 through 20 stand rejected as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,116,917 ("Choy"). Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Claim 1

As described in the previous Amendment and Response, independent Claim 1 relates to a device that includes a base having a lower surface and a receptacle coupled to the base. The receptacle defines an opening to receive an electrical module, and the received electrical module forms an acute angle with the lower surface. The device further includes a first contact (e.g., contact 30 of FIG. 1) of a first length protruding from the base and protruding from the receptacle into the opening, and a second contact (e.g., contact 40 of FIG. 1) of a second length, the second contact adjacent to the first contact, and the second contact protruding from the base and protruding from the receptacle into the opening. The first length and the second length are substantially equal. As described at least on page 3, lines 19 through 23, some embodiments of the foregoing may reduce signal skew of signals carried by the first contact and the second contact.

Choy is not seen to disclose or to suggest the foregoing features of Claim 1. Specifically, Choy is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least a first contact of a first length and a second contact of a second length adjacent to the first contact, where the first length and the second length are substantially equal. Choy is seen to describe contacts 16 disposed on two sides of central slot 14. FIG. 5 of Choy shows a first pair of adjacent contacts 16 disposed on one side of central slot 14, and a second pair of adjacent contacts 16 disposed on a second side of central slot 14. Contacts 16 are intended to carry signals from PC board 100 to a corresponding circuit pad of a card disposed in central slot 14.

Again attached hereto is Attachment A, a marked-up version of FIG. 5, in which the first pair of contacts 16 are labeled "W" and "X", and in which the second pair of contacts 16 are labeled "Y" and "Z". A length of contact W is different from a length of adjacent contact X, and a length of contact Y is different from a length of adjacent contact Z. As a result of the foregoing arrangement, a signal entering contact W will travel farther to reach its corresponding circuit pad than a signal entering adjacent contact X will travel to reach its corresponding circuit pad. The difference in travel distance may create signal skew between the signals.

In a telephone conversation on June 8, 2004, Examiner Nguyen indicated that connector 10 of Choy includes multiple instances of each of contacts W, X, Y and Z. Examiner Nguyen further indicated that since Choy is ambiguous as to the relative positions of, for example, two instances of contact W, Choy can be seen to describe two contacts W that are adjacent to each other. The Response to Arguments section of the outstanding Office Action appears to describe a similar argument.

Applicants respectfully disagree with the above argument for several reasons. First, according to M.P.E.P. §2131, a rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102 must show that a reference teaches every element of the rejected claim. Nowhere is Choy seen to describe contacts of substantially equal lengths that are adjacent to one another.

In addition, Applicants note that FIGS. 1 and 2 of Choy show holes 24 for receiving contacts W and X of connector 10. As clearly shown in FIG. 2, holes 24 are staggered so as to indicate that contacts W and X are disposed in an alternating pattern. Accordingly, no contact W is adjacent to another contact W, and no contact X is adjacent to another contact X.

No arrangement for contacts Y and Z is described within Choy. However, one of ordinary skill in the art would recognize that contacts Y and Z are also disposed in an alternating arrangement based on the conventional configuration of a slanted connector such as connector 10. To illustrate the knowledge of one of ordinary skill in the art, an IDS submitted herewith cites two separate slanted connector specifications and U.S. Patent 5,964,606 ("Choy 2"). The "Recommended PCB Layout" shown in each connector specification clearly illustrates that the four connectors (shown in the SEC A-A cutaway views) are arranged alternately on each side of the connector opening (e.g., W,X,W,X and Y,Z,Y,Z), and that none of the four connectors are adjacent to a substantially equal-length conductor. Choy 2, which shares inventorship and

assignee information with Choy, shows connectors W, X, Y and Z in a cutaway side view at FIG. 5 and in a cutaway perspective view at FIG. 6. Again, the connectors are arranged alternately on each side of the connector opening and none of the four connectors is adjacent to a substantially equal-length conductor.

For at least the foregoing reasons, Choy is not seen to disclose or to suggest at least a first contact of a first length and a second contact of a second length adjacent to the first contact, where the first length and the second length are substantially equal. Claim 1 and its dependent Claims 2 through 11 and 21 are therefore believed to be in condition for allowance. In this regard, newly-added Claim 21 roughly concerns a device according to Claim 1, wherein the first and second contacts are to be electrically coupled to respective connection pads disposed on a first side of the electrical module, and wherein all contacts that are to be electrically coupled to connection pads disposed on the first side of the electrical module are of substantially equal length.

Claims 12 and 19

Independent Claim 12 concerns a device that includes a connector to hold an electrical module at an acute angle with respect to a surface on which the connector is to be mounted, a first contact having a first portion to contact the surface and a second portion of the first contact to contact the electrical module, and a second contact adjacent to the first contact. A first portion of the second contact is to contact the surface and a second portion of the second contact is to contact the electrical module. A distance between the first portion of the first contact and the second portion of the first contact is substantially equal to a distance between the first portion of the second contact and the second portion of the second contact.

Returning to Attachment A, it is clear that the distance between a portion of contact W that is to contact a mounting surface ("W1") and a portion of contact W that is to contact an electrical module ("W2") is quite different from the distance between a portion of contact X that is to contact the mounting surface ("X1") and a portion of contact X that is to contact the electrical module ("X2"). Similarly, a portion of contact Y that is to contact the mounting surface ("Y1") and a portion of contact Y that is to contact the electrical module ("Y2") is not substantially identical to the distance between a portion of contact Z that is to contact the

mounting surface ("Z1") and a portion of contact Z that is to contact the electrical module ("Z2"). The differences between these distances may create signal skew between signals that are carried by adjacent contacts.

The outstanding rejection of Claims 12 and 19 appears to be based on Choy's alleged teaching of one instance of contact W (or X, Y and Z) being adjacent to another instance of contact W (or X, Y and Z). As described above, nowhere does Choy disclose two adjacent contacts having substantially equal lengths. One of ordinary skill in the art would clearly understand Choy to disclose alternating different-length contacts on either side of central slot 14.

Amended independent Claim 12 and dependent Claims 13 through 18 and 22 are therefore believed to be allowable. Claim 22 relates to a device according to Claim 12, wherein the first contact and the second contact are to contact a first side of the electrical module, and further including a plurality of contacts, a first portion of each of the plurality of contacts to contact the surface and a second portion of each of the plurality of contacts to contact the first side of the electrical module. A distance between the first portion of each contact to contact the first side of the electrical module and the second portion of each contact to contact the first side of the electrical module is substantially equal.

Amended independent Claim 19 concerns a system including features similar to those of Claim 12 and is believed to be in condition for allowance for at least those reasons given with respect to Claim 12. Claim 20, which depends from Claim 19, is therefore also believed to be allowable.

CONCLUSION

The outstanding Office Action presents a number of characterizations regarding the applied reference, some of which are not directly addressed herein because they are not related to the rejections of the independent claims. Applicants do not necessarily agree with the characterizations and reserve the right to further discuss those characterizations.

For at least the reasons given above, it is submitted that the entire application is in condition for allowance and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience. Alternatively, if there remains any question regarding the present application or any of the cited references, or if the Examiner has any further suggestions for expediting allowance of the present application, the Examiner is cordially requested to contact the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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Nandu A. Talwalkar
Registration No. 41,339
Buckley, Maschoff & Talwalkar LLC
Attorneys for INTEL Corporation
Five Elm Street
New Canaan, CT 06840
(203) 972-0049

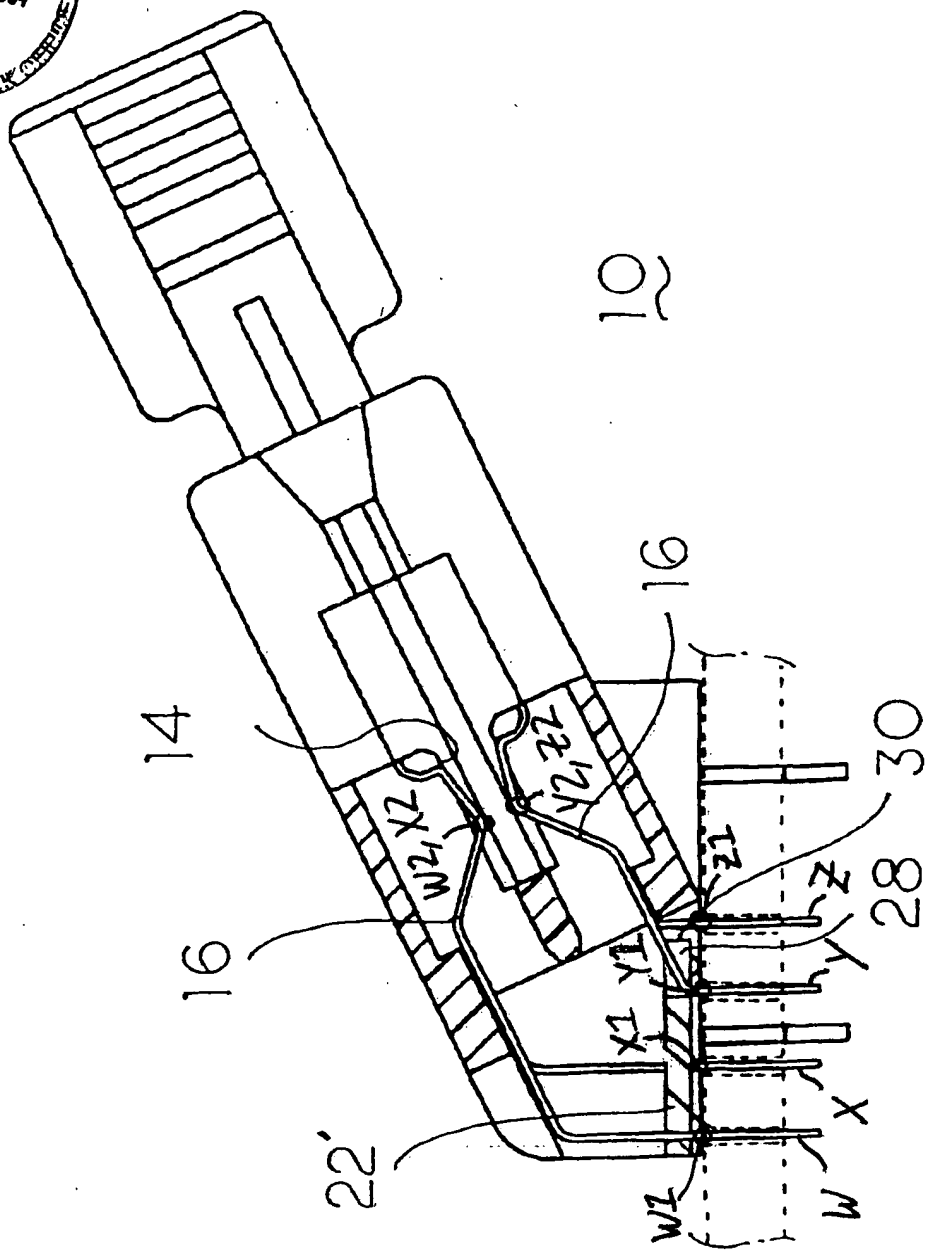

FIG.5

Attachment A